Ordnance depots surrounded by commercial and residential buildings

†2549 DR. A.K. PATEL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of ordnance depots which are surrounded by commercial and residential buildings in the country;

(b) whether Government are considering to remove such depots to protect the lives and properties of the residents adjoining them;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERN ANDES): (a) to (d) The Ordnance Depots were originally located away from the urban cities. Over the years the towns have expanded and now some of the depots are surrounded by urban habitation.

2. The Government is aware of the location of Ordnance Depots around which urban habitation have taken place. However, these habitations have come up in violation of the Indian Works of Defence Act 1903 which stipulates that restrictions should be imposed on the use of land in the vicinity of any Works of Defence and that such land be kept free from buildings and other obstructions for reasons of security of the establishment. The Ordnance Corps has 40 main Central and Regional Depots. Urban habitation in various degrees, have taken place around all the Depots.

3. Government has not issued any orders for shifting of any Ordnance Depot. The Depots are sited keeping in view strategic and tactical consideration. The Army authorities have a well laid down scheme for maintaining the safety of the Ordnance Depots. A scheme for safe storage accommodation in Ammunition Depots is in progress which would enhance the safety factor. The lives and properties of civilians living around these depots are not at risk.

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†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.